

the rule and consult with the States and stakeholders first or repropose the rule and allow a new round of public comment.

Mr. Speaker, there is too much on the line to continue down the current path.

ADDRESSING THE WEALTH GAP

(Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I have introduced the addressing the wealth gap resolution which calls on Congress to recognize the wealth gap and the racial wealth gap as national economic crises and focus its efforts on their elimination.

This country is facing the widest wealth gap since 1983. The statistics are alarming. Wealthy families make nearly seven times as much as middle class families and 70 times as much as lower class families. African Americans have 13 times and Latinos have 10 times less wealth than White households. White households have \$100,000 more in retirement savings than African Americans and Latinos.

The cause of the record-level wealth gap stems from a structural crisis that started well before the Great Recession. The recession hit, and the housing market collapsed and made everything worse.

In the aftermath, middle-income families and people of color have had to endure income inequality, slow wage growth, skyrocketing student loans, and continued unequal access to quality education and barriers to the housing market. These are problems that widened the gap and require Congress to implement pragmatic solutions.

We cannot sit idly by and expect things to change. This is why I am introducing the addressing the wealth gap resolution. The first step to resolving this problem is acknowledging that it exists, and I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join and focus on the goal of rebuilding wealth in America.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am here today representing the Congressional Progressive Caucus and to discuss our budget, the people's budget. I pray that I am not the only one that is speaking for the 60 minutes allotted.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives released their budget proposal. Although they have a new chairman, they are following the same

game plan: privatize Medicare, slash spending on safety net programs, and hope that tax cuts for the rich trickle down from top earners to the rest of the country.

That is not what the American people need. They need a plan that levels the playing field, that gives them an opportunity to succeed, and puts their interests above the interests of corporations and the wealthy. They need a budget that is of the people, by the people, and for the people. That is what we are offering in the people's budget.

If you need a way to pay for affordable child care while you are at your job, we have got it in the people's budget. If you need access to quality education for your children, teachers that are trained to give them the knowledge they need to be great, we have got it in the people's budget.

If you worked hard to get into college but now need a way to pay for your tuition, we have got it in the people's budget. If you can't make ends meet, if the pay you take home barely keeps a roof over your head and you are making important choices between food and shelter and you are looking for a livable wage, we have got it in the people's budget.

Mr. Speaker, in the hands of the GOP, this Congress has offered tax break after tax break after tax break after tax break for corporations and billionaires while cutting the very programs that working Americans rely on to pull themselves up the economic ladder that has given generations of American families access to the middle class.

If anyone deserves a tax cut, it is not millionaires. It is the folks that are loading the trucks, the folks that are scanning the groceries, the folks that are cleaning the office buildings, the folks that are working as clerks, the folks that are working as secretaries, and the folks that are doing the important service jobs that our society so needs.

The people's budget would invest in priorities that will keep the American people strong, just for everyone. It offers jobs that will restore our middle class. It addresses our Nation's most pressing challenges, issues like climate change, aging transportation infrastructure, access to education at every level, and good-paying jobs.

This, Mr. Speaker, is about restoring Congress' commitment to serving hard-working Americans who are playing by the rules but still not getting ahead. This, Mr. Speaker, is about the lives that regular Americans are able to live.

Some say that it is not hard to find any old job and get a paycheck, but does that job offer a high enough wage or enough hours to pay the rent? Can you take time off for illness or to take care of your kids? Do you know that you will have enough to pay for child care while you are at the job? Do you have health insurance in the event that you need it?

My Congressional Progressive Caucus colleagues and I think that taxpaying Americans deserve to confidently answer "yes" to all of these questions, and that is what we are fighting for.

Today, we were given the distinct opportunity to present tenets of our budget to a group of interested people—everyday working people—people who are working for decent-paying jobs.

They are not looking for handouts. They are looking for recognition that they are part of this American Dream, and it is our responsibility to ensure that we are not impediments, but that we are facilitators of that American Dream for everyone.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the chairman of the Progressive Caucus, Congressman ELLISON.

Mr. ELLISON. Let me thank the gentlewoman for yielding, the Congresswoman from New Jersey, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN.

As I said earlier today, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN may have just got sworn in as a Member of Congress a few months ago, but she is no stranger to fighting for people.

That was on full display when she spoke at a rollout of our Progressive Caucus budget where she talked about how you can look at any aspect of the Progressive Caucus budget and you will find the same thing in every place: prioritizing people, making sure people can get their needs met in this government, making sure that workers can get access to a job, making sure that people who are sick but who are working can actually get a sick day so that they don't bring that sickness back to their workplace and don't have to abandon their children that might be sick, too.

You pointed out, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, the fact is that job creation should be the primary metric of any budget. How are we doing putting people back to work in good jobs? How are we helping take care of them while they are on the job? If they are sick, can they take time off? How are we educating people? You focused on the key elements of the Progressive Caucus budget, and I was proud to hear you do it.

The fact is this is our fifth budget that we have put out. It is a budget that is about working people. That is why we call it the people's budget. We urge people to check out the people's budget online at the Congressional Progressive Caucus Web site.

Let me name a few things about the Progressive Caucus budget that are important to highlight. It creates 8.4 million good-paying jobs by 2018.

Now, you just take the Republican budget that was put out yesterday. It was interesting to me that none of my Republican colleagues wanted to tout how many jobs their budget would create, how many jobs the economists—after looking at the Republican budget proposed—would create because that is not what they consider to be a priority;